

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 9728

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, CO

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY TO FOREIGN MINISTER

INDELECIO LIEVANO AGUIRRE

REF STATE 241824

1. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER CONTAINED REFTEL. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO HAS SHARPLY CRITICIZED THE SECRETARY FOR HIS DECISION NOT TO ATTEND THE QUITO MEETING. LIEVANO REITERATED AND EXPANDED THIS CRITICISM TWO DAYS AGO WHEN HE TOLD A REPORTER THAT "KISSINGER'S ABSENCE FROM THE MEETING DEMONSTRATED THE DAMAGE BEING SUFFERED BY THESE ORGANIZATIONS BECAUSE OF THE GREAT POWERS' INCREASING TENDENCY TO RESOLVE THE WORLD'S MOST ACUTE PROBLEMS AMONG THEMSELVES AND BEHIND THE BACKS OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS...IT IS NOT RIGHT TO WEAKEN THESE ORGANIZATIONS' POWERS OF DECISION, REPLACING IT WITH TRAVELING DIPLOMACY, NO MATTER HOW INTELLIGENT OR IMAGINATIVE, AS HAS BEEN THE CASE OF MR. KISSINGER". HE ADDED..."I DO NOT BELIEVE IT HARMFUL FOR THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM TO HAVE ITS INTERNATIONAL FORUMS DISCUSS DIFFERENCES THAT ARE NOT CREATED FOR THE SAKE OF DISCUSSION, BUT WHICH ALREADY EXIST AND DO NOT DISAPPEAR MERELY BECAUSE THEY ARE APPARENTLY IGNORED".

2. ON THE EVENING OF NOVEMBER 1ST I PARTICIPATED IN AN EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF THE CUBAN PROBLEM AND THE QUITO
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MEETING WITH THE NUMBER TWO AND THREE MEN AT THE FOREIGN

OFFICE AND THE AMBASSADORS OF VENEZUELA, COSTA RICA AND URUGUAY AMONG OTHERS. THIS CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE AT A DINNER GIVEN BY THE AMBASSADOR OF YUGOSLAVIA. BOTH FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS ARE CONSERVATIVE MEN WHOSE INSTINCTS ARE AGAINST ANY ACCOMMODATION WITH CUBA' THEY ARGUED STRONGLY, HOWEVER, THAT UNLESS THE COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN-COSTA RICAN INITIATIVE SUCCEEDED, THE OAS, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY THE RIO TREATY, WOULD BE PLACED IN GRAVE JEOPARDY. THEY EMPHASIZED THAT OAS APPROVAL DID NOT DICTATE RECOGNITION IMPLYING THAT COLOMBIA WOULD BE IN NO HURRY TO RECOGNIZE CUBA. THE COSTA RICAN AMBASSADOR ARGUED EVEN MORE STRONGLY ALONG THE SAME LINES. MORE IMPORTANTLY, AS THE EVENING WORE ON AND HE DRANK MORE, HE ASSERTED THAT THE COSTA RICAN FOREIGN MINISTER WAS MOST CONCERNED THAT THERE DID NOT EXIST SUFFICIENT VOTES TO REMOVE THE SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA. THERE THEN BEGAN THE COUNTING GAME AND ALL OF THE COMPANY AGREED THAT THERE WERE NOT 14 CERTAIN VOTES, UNLESS AND UNTIL THE UNITED STATES SIGNALLED ITS POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE RESOLUTION.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE DISCUSSION WAS SEVERELY LIMITED BECAUSE I HAVE NO IDEA OF WHAT THE U.S. POSITION IS OR HOW WE ARE GOING TO VOTE.

4. I BELIEVE THAT THE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY THE FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS REPRESENT THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S ATTITUDE. HE IS, I AM SURE, RESENTFUL THAT THE U.S. HAS NOT COMMUNICATED OUR THINKING ON THE CONFERENCE TO HIM, ESPECIALLY SINCE HE BELIEVES HE FOUGHT OUR FIGHT TO PREVENT VENEZUELA FROM TAKING PRECIPITATE ACTION ON THE CUBAN QUESTION EARLIER. THEREFORE, I PLAN TO HOLD THE SECRETARY'S LETTER UNTIL MONDAY IN HOPE THAT I WILL RECEIVE SOME GUIDELINES THAT WILL ENABLE ME TO REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT AND DISCUSS THE SITUATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER. LACKING THE RECEIPT OF SUCH A MESSAGE, I WILL SEND THE LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER BUT WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO SEE HIM PERSONALLY.
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